

WATERWAY BETWEEN BIRMINGHAM, ALA., AND THE
BLACK WARRIOR RIVER.

JANUARY 22, 1897.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state
of the Union and ordered to be printed.

Mr. HOOKER, from the Committee on Rivers and Harbors, submitted
the following

REPORT.

[To accompany H. Res. 231.]

The Committee on Rivers and Harbors, to whom was referred the joint resolution (H. Res. 231) relative to the improvement of the waterway between Birmingham, Ala., and the Black Warrior River, submit the following report:

The last river and harbor bill ordered a preliminary examination of this project. The local engineer reports conditions such that it is impossible to make a preliminary examination without an accurate survey, and says:

In view of the magnitude of the interests involved, I recommend that a careful survey be made, and I estimate that it will cost \$15,000.

The Chief of Engineers concurs in these views, and recommends the survey. If this improvement can be made at any reasonable cost, it ought to be undertaken. It will give to the iron furnaces and coal mines of the Birmingham district water transportation from their sites to the sea. Pig iron is made there more cheaply than anywhere else in the world. Within three months past there has been an unexampled and wonderful development in the export of iron from those furnaces to Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and Japan. With this waterway Alabama iron and coal can take and hold many of the great markets of the world. At least, Congress should know as soon as possible whether the attainment of this great end of national importance is practicable. It is unnecessary to make an appropriation for the survey. The unexpended balance of the appropriation heretofore made for the improvement of the Black Warrior River from Tuscaloosa to Daniels Creek can be wisely used for this purpose, and is sufficient.

The committee therefore recommend that the resolution be amended by striking out section 2 thereof and inserting in its place the following:

SEC. 2. That the cost of such survey shall be defrayed from the unexpended balance of the funds heretofore appropriated for the improvement of the Black Warrior River from Tuscaloosa to Daniels Creek.

The committee recommend that the resolution, as so amended, do pass.